



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Jewel Cave  
National Monument

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## **Jewel Cave National Monument News Release**

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For Immediate Release

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### **Jewel Cave Takes Reservations for Cub Scout Belt Loopalooza**

Custer – Jewel Cave National Monument is gearing up for its Cub Scout Belt Loopalooza event, scheduled for Saturday, July 21 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Monument hosted the event for the first time in 2011 and experienced an audience of Cub Scouts from four different states. The partnership between the Monument and the local Black Hills Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America continues to grow, and this special event has become an annual program for both agencies.

The Monument used grant funds received last year from the National Park Foundation to obtain the supplies and materials for the event. Through an all day festival of sorts, participating Cub Scouts interact with resource professionals toward the successful completion of belt loop awards and related patches that complement the protection, preservation, and conservation of public lands. Superintendent Larry Johnson comments, “The Belt Loopalooza in 2011 was a wonderful success with nearly 100 scouts and family members. Because of this, we are excited to host it again and look forward to an even larger attendance this year. “

The event showcases an educational partnership between many surrounding public land agencies, such as Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Wind Cave National Park, Black Hills National Forest, Custer State Park, and the Black Hills Parks and Forests Association. Participating Cub Scouts, ages 7-13, will take part in an assortment of engaging experiences and hands-on learning opportunities related to environmental education and site interpretation.

The event offers ten belt loop topics, which include the following: Astronomy, Geography, Geology, Heritages, Hiking, Maps and Compass, Physical Fitness, Science, Weather, and Wildlife Conservation. Participating Cub Scouts can select five of the ten belt loops and accomplish the requirements through individual stations. Park rangers, naturalists, game officers, and related public servants are the leaders of the stations. Reservations are required and are currently being taken through the Jewel Cave Visitor Center.

Johnson further states, “The Cub Scout Belt Loopalooza complements the Scout Ranger Program of the National Park Service, by offering an activity for younger scouts. Youth engagement is a priority of the agency, and we are thrilled to expose our local scouts and their families to the significance behind their public lands.”

To make a reservation or to learn more about the Monument, call the visitor center at 605-673-8300 and select Option 2. Visitors are also welcome to check out the Monument online at [www.nps.gov/jeca](http://www.nps.gov/jeca). The visitor center is currently open during the summer season from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

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Ranger Mitch Sawicki teaches a Cub Scout how to measure make-believe cave passageways from the safety of the ponderosa pine forest. NPS Photo

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*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 395 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).*

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